

Joe Shields
16822 Stardale Lane
Friendswood, Texas 77546
Home: 281-482-7603
Work: 281-853-3466

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Federal Communications Commission
Attn: Kevin J. Martin
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Martin

I am writing to you in reference to recent news articles claiming that the Commission is considering protecting wireless carriers from class action law suits filed in state courts. These law suits have been brought upon the wireless carriers themselves due to their abusive treatment of consumers. I experienced this abusive treatment first hand when I wanted to drop 1 of my 4 family plan lines. I was threatened with an early termination fee of \$170.00 even as late as 2 weeks before the end of the 2 year contract¹. Because of that we were forced to keep the line for 7 months.

Wireless carriers claim the early termination fee covers the cost of subsidizing the wireless phones. I believe the Commission is being misled by this excuse. Most of these "free" or discounted wireless phones can be purchased for much less than the early termination fee. The wireless phones that I have in the past selected with our family plan could have been purchased on the open market for 1/2 the cost of the \$170.00² early termination fee.

I would also like to point out that these so called free or discounted phones are "crippled" and locked to the carriers network. As new features are introduced by the carrier the consumer has to replace the wireless phone to be able to use the new feature. And of course the wireless phone won't work on any other network. Simply put, the wireless phones from wireless carriers are not worth what they claim them to be worth. My family uses unlocked and unbranded phones as we prefer being able to change start up screens to something other than the carriers in your face start up screens, they work worldwide on any network and all of the features work on our wireless phones.

I would also like to point out that the credibility of wireless carriers is questionable. When I complained to the Commission about an illegal text message ad on my cell phone AT&T Wireless (then Cingular) lied to the Commission claiming they had nothing to do with it. I found out they had lied when I filed suit against their affiliate - then they admitted they were responsible for it. Similarly, AT&T wireless lied to the Commission about removing the Asurion Roadside Assistance (\$2.99 per line.). In their response to the Commission they never addressed my complaint - being signed up for a 3rd party service without notice or being given the opportunity to decline the service.

I hope the Commission will not fall for the deception the wireless carriers are laying on the Commission. Please do not give them a "get out of jail" free card. That is not in the best interests of consumers.

Respectfully,



Joe Shields
Systems Engineer Staff

¹ My family plan is with AT&T Wireless

² Nokia 6010 and 6102